



## **CONSUMER ALERT: Senior Citizens in Northwest Wisconsin Being Targeted by Health Care Scam**

**Release Date:** November 17, 2011

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MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is receiving an increased number of calls from senior citizens in northwest Wisconsin who are getting calls from scammers posing as a representative of Medicare or an insurance company. The scammer asks for personal information like a Social Security number or bank account number.

“During the Medicare open enrollment period, identity thieves use this opportunity to take advantage of senior citizens,” said Sandy Chalmers, Administrator of the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection. “If someone calls you and asks for personal information, hang up.”

DATCP offers these five consumer tips to protect senior citizens:

- Be suspicious of anyone contacting you by phone, mail, or in person saying they are from Medicare. Call Medicare using the number on the back of your card to verify if the representative is legitimate.
- If someone says they represent Medicare and asks to verify your Social Security number, bank account number, address, or doctor, do not provide or confirm it. Never provide such information unless you made the initial contact and know whom you are dealing with.
- If someone calls asking for your bank account number to deposit a prescription drug refund because you have reached your threshold, do not provide it. Medicare would already have the information needed to send the check.
- Know what insurance forms you are signing and what charges you are authorizing. Keep accurate records, and know what services you are being charged for.
- Do not carry your Medicare or Medicaid card with you unless you need it for an appointment or trip to the pharmacy. Shred sensitive documents with Medicare or health insurance information after they are no longer useful.

For more information or if you believe this scam has happened to you, contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection by calling toll-free at 1-800-422-7128 or emailing [datcphotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcphotline@wisconsin.gov).

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